increase was, as usual, in petty suits, those below Rs. 50 in value. I have, elsewhere, referred to the Bill for the constitution of Village Panchayat Courts, which now awaits final reading in the Legislative Council. The object of this legislation is to transfer gradually to village bodies (to be newly created) a portion of the large volume of petty litigation which has now to be dealt with by the stipendiary Courts. The success of the legislation would, of course, depend wholly on the way in which the people work it.

15. **Registration.**—Four new sub-registry offices were opened and a new registration district was also formed. There was a decrease of 9,500 in the number of documents presented for registration, due, it is said, to the passing of the Nair Regulation, and the restriction imposed thereby on the powers of the *karanavan* in alienating the *tarwad* properties. There was an increase in the receipts of the Department, on account of the fact that the revision of the fee table effected in 1087 was in operation throughout the year ; but, *per contra*, the expenditure went up by Rs. 34,000, on account of the reorganisation of the department and the additional offices opened. In the result, the ratio of the expenditure to the gross income rose from 31% to 37%.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

16. **Agriculture.**—The Agricultural Department did good work during the year. Copies of Dr. Kunjan Pillai's report—in English and in Malayalam—will be placed in the hands of the Members. It is a matter of satisfaction to the Government that the efforts of this Department are being responded to, to an increasing extent, by the ryots. The cocoanut palm disease in Middle Travancore continued to engage serious attention. The inspection of the infected areas and the numbering of the affected trees in them, the segregation of the infected trees in isolated areas, the issue of special manures, the propagation of disease-resistant varieties of the cocoanut and other measures, were vigorously pushed on.

17. **Public Works.**—The total expenditure on Public Works amounted to the high figure of Rs. 36,85,000, of which a sum of Rs. 33,57,000 was expended by the Chief Engineer and Rs. 3,28,000 by the Maramath Department. The expenditure on the Kodayar Project during the year was Rs. 3,88,000, the capital outlay on the Project working up to Rs. 68,40,000 at the close of 1088 Public Works—including Irrigation—account for a substantial portion of the increase which has taken place in the expenditure of the State during the last six years, and under Mr. Bastow's skilful guidance, the Chief Engineer's Department has attained a high level of usefulness and efficiency. The following figures will be instructive :—

1082	Rs. 15,80,000.
1083	„ 17,25,000.
1084	„ 20,87,000.
1085	„ 24,99,000.
1086	„ 22,78,000.
1087	„ 25,10,000.
1088	„ 33,57,000.

Most of the subjects brought up year after year in the Assembly relate to the need for more public works, mainly communications ; also, numerous buildings are on hand for the several departments of the Government, mainly Education. It is inevitable, under these circumstances, that the expenditure on Public Works should go up. On account of the large increase in the expenditure on works, the charges on account of the establishment of the Chief Engineer fell from 15% of the total outlay in 1087 to 13% in 1088.

In November 1908, the Kottayam Members of the Fifth Session of the Assembly framed a scheme of works for their Division. To enable you to realise the progress made in carrying out that programme, I have ordered a statement to be prepared,

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